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CONSIDERATIONS
ON A
COMPREHENSION,
OR
UNION of *PROTESTANTS*,

By Reconciling and Uniting the *K*

More Moderate DISSENTERS

TO THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND;

Submitted to the Attention of our GOVERNORS,
and all Denominations of *Protestants*.



By an IMPARTIAL HAND.

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Submitted by the
Committee of the
Church of England



CONSIDERATIONS

ON A

COMPREHENSION,

OR

UNION of PROTESTANTS, &c.

BEING sensible that the Subject-Matter of these Papers is of a very delicate Nature, and knowing how difficult and dangerous it is to encounter with the powerful Influence of Prejudice and Prepossession, the Author thinks it necessary, in order to anticipate or prevent the fatal Effects of such unhappy Conceptions, previously to declare, that he neither is, nor ever was a Dissenter, but has always conformed to the Church of *England*, whose Doctrine and Worship, in general, he verily believes to be the most orthodox, pure, and perfect, of any *Christian* Church now in being. But then he would observe, in the Words of the learned, candid, and ingenuous Dr. *Rogers*, (whose Zeal and hearty Affection for the Church Established was never questioned) who speaking of the Lawfulness of our Terms of Communion, “ acknowledges for himself, and (says he) I may for the greater Part of my Brethren, that we judge our present Constitution might, in many Respects, be altered for the better : * Some of us imagine we see Defects in one Part, and some in another.”

And a Rumour prevailing, that Overtures have been made for a Comprehension or Union amongst *Protestants*, I

* *Persuasive to Conformity*, p. 37.

was willing to offer my Mite in Favour of so *Christian* a Design; a Design, truly laudable in itself, exactly conformable to the many moving Exhortations of *Christ* and his Apostles, naturally tending to promote and encrease Brotherly Love and Charity, and which will also be such a Security to our present happy Establishment both in Church and State, by uniting *Protestants* in one holy Communion, as that it may be deemed an invincible Bulwark and Safeguard against *Papery* and the Pretender, whenever it shall please Divine Providence to permit its Accomplishment.

It must be confessed, the discussing of Points so interesting, curious, and tender, should have been executed by a Person of superior Abilities; but however imperfect or deficient this Performance may be, yet as my sole Intentions are to promote Peace, Love, and Unity; to advance the Glory, and enlarge the Borders of our Church, and that only by just and lawful Methods; if these my poor Endeavours do but animate and excite some more able Hand, to appear an Advocate for so commendable an Enterprize, that Consideration alone will afford me a great inward Satisfaction, and amply reward all my Labour and Pains.

In order to remove the Prejudices of some, and to influence the Zeal and Affection of others, to approve of, and engage in the Design of a Comprehension, thereby to unite and strengthen the *Protestant* Interest, I apprehend the following Method may be highly expedient.

First, To evince and prove that the Design of promoting a greater Union amongst *Protestants*, by a Comprehension, is not only lawful and desirable in itself, but has been particularly approved of and recommended by several eminent Bishops and Divines of our Church.

Secondly, To observe what those Differences and Matters in Dispute are, which chiefly occasion the Dissenters to separate from us.

Thirdly, To propose such Alterations in Things necessary, as would be for the real Honour and Advantage of the Church of *England* to have altered and amended, even without any Regard to a Comprehension, or Favour to the Dissenters.

That Concord and Union amongst *Christians* is a Gospel Duty, no one can doubt, who is in the least conversant in the Holy Scriptures. Whether you have (says Dr. Rogers, in

in his Address to the Dissenters *) “ complied with this Duty or not, will best appear by considering what Union the Scriptures require from us, and by what Methods we are obliged to promote it. And *First*, It is agreed, that the Precepts of the Gospel require an Union of Love and Charity amongst its Disciples, a Tenderness of Affection, a Readiness to perform all Offices of Humanity and Benevolence towards each other; in short, to be studious of the Peace and Interests of our Brethren, and do all in our power to promote them. But, *Secondly*, a more special Union is enjoined us as *Christians*, that we have *one Faith, one Baptism, Ephes. iv. 5, 6.* acknowledge and worship *one God and Father of all, and one Mediator Christ Jesus.* I hope, Brethren, that in these Points there is no Difference between us; that you worship the same God, trust in the same Redeemer, acknowledge the same Sacraments, and profess the same Creed and Articles that we do. But, *Thirdly*, there is still a farther Union required from a Communication with each other in the outward Offices and Ordinances of Religion. As this is the Point in which it is our Unhappiness to be divided, I beg Leave to offer it more particularly to your Attention.”

“ Now your Obligation to this Union might appear to you, considered only as the most effectual Means to cultivate that Love and Charity which the Gospel in general requires among *Christians*; and I may add, the Peace and Happiness of the Civil Society to which we belong, for the Promotion of these is also an unquestionable Duty of our Religion. How fatal a Tendency Divisions in Religion have to alienate Men’s Hearts from each other, how naturally they produce Strife and Variance, how much they put it in the power of ambitious Men to divide us into secular Factions and Parties, how destructive they are of public Peace and private Charity, needs no other Proof than our own and our Fathers Experience; and consequently, being united in Religious Communion, is, in the same Proportion, an effectual Means to prevent and cure these Evils, and to promote that Love and Charity, that Peace and Happiness which they destroy. If then it be our Duty, by all lawful Means, to promote these good Ends, it is our Duty, so far as law-

* *Persuasive to Conformity*, p. 4.

fully, we may, to be united in religious Communion, as a Means the most conducive to them. This Argument, therefore, will infer our Obligation to be joined in religious Communion, *if it be possible, and as far as lies in us*; and, doubtless, the Divine Wisdom had these happy Effects in View, when he commanded it."

"In what Acts this religious Communion consists, we may collect from Scripture. Of the first Converts to the *Christian Church* we read, that — *they continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer*, Acts ii. 42. i. e. they continued firm and undivided in the Belief and Profession of that Doctrine which the Apostles taught, united in one *Fellowship, Society, or Church*, over which they presided; and testified this Union by communicating with them and each other in *Prayer*, and receiving together the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.— What was the Duty of those first Christians, remains a Duty to all Christians unto the End of the World."—"If such Union be a Duty founded on plain Precepts of the Gospel, a Breach of this Union, where it can be preserved, must be a Sin; which Sin has obtained the Name of Schism, or Division."

This Reasoning is very strong and conclusive, to prove, not only the Lawfulness, but even Necessity of an Union among *Protestants*; and is still of greater Weight, under the Authority produced, to influence the Members of the Church of *England* to promote and endeavour at such an Union; in like Manner as he designed it should be to the Dissenters. And it is with a View to answer both these Purposes, that I have made this Extract from him.

Archbishop *Wake*, in a Sermon * exhorting to Union and mutual Charity, expresses himself much in the same Manner: Says his Grace, "'Tis certain, that amidst all our other Divisions, we are yet on all Sides agreed on whatsoever is fundamental in the Faith, or necessary to be believed and professed by us, in order to our Salvation; there is no good *Protestant* but what does firmly believe all the Articles of the Apostles Creed, and embraces the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, and Rule of his Faith; the Difference between those Errors for which we separate from the Church

* Preached before King *William* and Queen *Mary*, 1689.

of *Rome*, and those Controversies which sometimes arise amongst *Protestants*, are, that the former are in Matters of the greatest Consequence; such as tend directly to overthrow the Integrity of Faith, and the Purity of our Worship; and therefore such as are in their own Nature destructive of the very Essentials of *Christianity*; whereas our Differences do not at all concern the Foundations either of Faith or Worship.—I cannot see, why we who are so happily joined together in a common Profession of the same Faith, at least, I am sure in all the necessary Points of it, should not also be united in the same common Worship of God.” And, after vindicating the Purity of our Doctrine, and Innocency of our Worship, he then adds:

“ But since Mens Scruples are unaccountable, and, after all that can be said, they will still differ, even about indifferent Things, and be afraid many Times where no Fear is; and a too long Experience has already shewn us, that if ever we mean to accomplish that Union so much recommended to us by our Apostle *St. Paul*, so advantageous to the Church at all Times, but especially at this Time so necessary to our Peace, and to our Establishment, that it seems to be the only way that yet remains to settle and secure us; and, upon all these Accounts, so much to be desired by all good Men; we must seek it by that Rule which *St. Paul* proposed to the dissenting *Christians*; *We then that are strong in the Faith, ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.* I cannot but think it a Reflection becoming every good *Christian*, but, in a more especial Manner, worthy the Consideration of such an Auditory as this, whether something may not yet be done for the sake of Peace, and to bring Things to such a Temper, that both Order and Decency may still be preserved, and yet our Unity no longer broken.—Such a blessed Union as this would conduce to the Glory of God, the Security of our Religion, and to the Promotion of Peace, and Charity, and Piety among us. I need not say what a Dishonour our Divisions have already brought to the Reformation; nor what a Stop they have put to the Progress of it; and methinks there should need no other Argument to stir up every true Friend to the Name of *Protestant*, to endeavour all he can to compose our Differences, than this one Thing, that we are sufficiently convinced who they are that we please, and whose Interests we serve, by the Continuance of them.” There

There is a remarkable Passage in a Letter writ in Defence of the Bill for uniting *Protestants*, in 1689. referred to by Archbishop *Wake*, when Bishop of *Lincoln*, in his Speech on *Sacheverel's* Trial, in 1710. not impertinent to the Occasion.

* “As for the *French* and *German*, and other foreign *Christians* of the Reformed Religion; I am well assured, both by Conversation, and Letters lately sent from *Holland*, *Geneva*, *Switzerland*, and other Places, (not to speak of the Churches of the *Lutheran* Communion, which write the same) that they look upon the Church of *England*, at this Time, as the Center of *Protestant* Unity; and esteem the Conditions proposed in this Bill, (which have been communicated to them) as Terms full of *Christian* Moderation, and fit for the uniting of *Protestants*.”

The same good Bishop, upon another Occasion, † thus expresses himself; “We should not only labour to establish a happy Unity among ourselves at Home, but as becomes a People professing itself the Head of the *Protestant* Interest, we should endeavour yet farther to unite all the Reformed Churches and States abroad, in the strictest Bonds of Love and Peace: Oh! that I might add of Church Communion too, both among themselves, and with us; as our surest Defence against our common Enemies.”

Archbishop *Sharp*, lamenting our unhappy Differences and Dissentions, breaks forth in a holy Extasy; ‡ “Oh! would to God some Balm could be found for the Healing of those Wounds. Is it not Pity, that we who are all of one Religion, and do equally profess an Aversion to the Tyranny and Corruptions, and Superstitions of the Church of *Rome*, should yet be at such Distance from one another, that we cannot worship God together? Notwithstanding our little Differences in Opinion, it is hard we cannot all agree in the common Terms of worshipping God, and partaking of his Sacraments; especially, since we all acknowledge that we agree in more Things than are precisely needful for the carrying us to Heaven. Certain it is, nothing is more pressed in the New Testament, than this Unity and Communion amongst *Christians*.---Oh! that God

* *Kennet's Compleat Hist.* Vol. III. p. 588. in the Notes.

† *Serm. before King George I.* 1715.

‡ *Serm.* Vol. VI. p. 29, 30.

would be pleased to affect all those who profess his Religion in the Truth and Purity of it, with a deep and lively Sense of these Things.---Inestimable, indeed, are the Benefits that would accrue thereby, *both to the Church and State*, and to every one of us in particular.---By this Means we should remove the Scandals that our Divisions give to the Enemies of our Religion, and should disappoint them of the most considerable Advantages they have against us, for the making Profelytes to their Party."

And Dr. *Gibson*, the present Bishop of *London*, assures us, * " that it has always been an avowed Maxim with him, that amidst so great Disaffections, as we have seen, and do still see, that nothing can preserve our Succession in the *Protestant* Line, but Unanimity among those who have ever appeared its fast Friends, indeed, and not in Profession only; those who neither mean the Pretender themselves, nor have ever listed under them that did. This he has always declared and enforced in the most open and public Manner, whenever Opportunity fell in his Way."

" Give me Leave to add, (says his Lordship) that the Unanimity which is here represented as the surest Foundation of Safety to the State, is the same that was enforced as the best Means of *enlarging and strengthening the Church*, by no less Authority than that of Archbishop *Sanncraft*; and this not in a hasty and private Manner, but upon the most mature Deliberation, and among the Articles of Direction solemnly transmitted to the Bishops and Clergy of his Province, in the Year 1688. the Eleventh of which is,

" That they walk in Wisdom towards those who are not of our Communion; more especially, that they have a very tender Regard to our Brethren the *Protestant Dissenters*; that upon Occasion offered, they visit them at their Houses, and receive them kindly at their own, and treat them fairly wherever they meet them, if it may be, to a full Compliance with our Church; and that they warmly and most affectionately exhort them to join with us, in daily fervent Prayer to the God of Peace, for an *universal blessed Union of all reformed Churches*, both at Home and Abroad, against our common Enemies; and that all they who do confess the holy Name of our dear Lord, and do agree in the Truth of his holy Word, may also meet in *one holy Communion*, and live in perfect Unity and Godly Love."

* Preface to four Sermons, pag. 15. 18. 1719.

"These Directions (says the Bishop of London) were published by that learned Prelate, a few Months before the Revolution happened; and yet how inhumanly were his two great Successors * treated, or rather persecuted, as Enemies and Betrayers of the Church, only for pursuing those Directions; having no other Crime, but the endeavouring to cultivate a good Understanding among Protestants, at home and abroad, as the only Means, under God, to support the Church of England, and the whole Protestant Interest, against the Designs and Attempts of Popery.---For to say, that a Design in itself so pious and Christian, was not to be attempted without undermining and endangering the Church of England, is a Reproach which our Church has not deserved."

From hence it evidently appears, that the present Bishop of London highly approves of a Comprehension or Union with Dissenters, and is what he has always declared and enforced in the most open and public Manner, whenever Opportunity fell in his Way; as the only Means, under God, to support the Church of England, and the whole Protestant Interest, against the Designs and Attempts of Popery.

And a learned modern Author, having evinced the Necessity of an Union, by several good Reasons, says, "Our Differences are neither about Faith nor Manners; we all believe in one and the same God, hope to be saved by one and the same Redeemer, desire to be sanctified by one and the same Sanctifier, receive one and the same Scriptures, assent to the same Doctrines, acknowledge the Necessity of the same Duties. Our Disputes are only about lesser Matters, which might be easily composed and settled, if managed by Men of Prudence and Moderation †."

I hope the Reasoning and Arguments that have been produced under the Sanction of so great Authorities, expressed in their own Words, will be sufficient to prove the Lawfulness, the Piety, and absolute Necessity, of an Union among Protestants at all Times. And it should be remarked, that the Motives to such an Union severally urged by these learned and eminent Prelates of our Church, are taken from, and enforced by "either plain Precepts of the Gospel, † or recommended to us by St. Paul," or, "as the

* Tillotson and Tenison.

† Bishops Sharp and Wake.

‡ Lord King's History of the three first Centuries.

only Means, under God, to support the Church of England, and the whole Protestant Interest, against the Designs and Attempts of Popery, and as the surest Defence against our common Enemies *.” And what more powerful Arguments can be urged or desired to influence every Member of the Church of England, as well as Dissenters of all Denominations, to promote, join in, and facilitate a Comprehension, or Union among Protestants. The Reasoning is equally strong, conclusive, and obligatory on both Parties, and each ought to contribute their Endeavours to effect it. For, as Dr. Rogers judiciously observes, † “there is doubtless a sinful Separation between us, a Breach of that spiritual Union and Bond of Peace, which Christian Religion prescribes, and on whom the Guilt of it lies, it concerns us on both Sides to enquire;” and let me add, endeavour to heal and reconcile.

Such a blessed Union is so far from endangering the Established Church, or our present Constitution, that it will, in the Opinion of these great Men tend to its greater Security and Preservation, also “conduce to the Glory of God, to the promoting of Peace, Charity, and Piety among us.” And tho’ it must be confessed that the general Design of the Arguments produced on the Occasion, are calculated and were intended to persuade and prevail on Dissenters to conform to the Established Church in its present Constitution, yet let me be permitted to ask, what Harm could ensue to the Church of England, were the Terms of Communion rendered more easy, and less liable to Objection? especially, as Dr. Rogers candidly owns, † “that if any Dissenter is persuaded in his Mind, that the Terms of Communion which our Church requires from him, are sinful, he cannot, while that Persuasion continues, innocently act against it.”

“I would not be understood to mean any Alteration in our Establishment, but in such Things as are declared to be alterable by the Church itself. “And if things alterable, be altered upon the Grounds of Prudence and Charity; if Things defective be supplied, and Things abused be restored to their proper Use; and Things of a more ordinary Compo-

* Bishops Sancroft, Wake, London.

† Rogers’s Address to Dissenters, p. 10. 24.

† Ibid.

sition, be revised and improved, whilst the Doctrine, Government, and Worship of the Church remain entire in all the substantial Parts of them; we have all Reason to believe (says Archbishop *Wake* *) that this will be so far from injuring the Church, that, on the contrary, it will receive a very great Benefit by it; and, I hope, it will not be thought any Crime, for the Bishops and Clergy of our Church, to be willing to enlarge its Communion by any Methods, which may be likely to gain others, and yet not injure our own Establishment." For as the eminently pious and Christian Prelate Bishop *Bradford* charitably expresses himself, on the Occasion †, "What should hinder amongst Protestants, but that the same Terms upon which a Man becomes a Christian, the same upon which he is made a Member of Christ, a Child of God, and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven; should at the same Time qualify him for being admitted to the Communion of any of these Churches? Why should any truly Christian Church exclude from it's Communion, any such Person, as we have Reason to believe our Lord will not exclude from his heavenly Kingdom, according to the Terms of the Gospel." This brings me,

2dly, To observe, what those Differences and Matters in Dispute are, which chiefly occasion the Dissenters to separate from us.

From what has been already offered, it is very clear and evident, that our Disputes are not about the Essentials of Religion; but that "We are on all Sides agreed on whatsoever is fundamental in the Faith, or necessary to be believed and professed by us in order to our Salvation. There is no good Protestant, but does firmly believe all the Articles of the Apostles Creed, and embraces the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, and Rule of his Faith ||." And the Bishop of *London* also assures us, "That it will appear, that the several *Denominations of Christians* agree, both in the *Substance of Religion*, and in the necessary Inforcements of the Practice of it ‡". Our Differences are about lesser Matters, and a melancholy Consideration it is, that such

* *Sacheverell's Trial*, 8vo Edit. p. 213.

† Sermon before the King, *Jan.* 10, 1717.

‡ *Wake*.

‡ Second Pastoral Letter, p. 24.

Things as are either in their own Nature indifferent, or are only Points of mere Speculation, or concerning the Modes and external Parts of Worship, should have produced such Wrath and Bitterness, Strife and Contention among us, as shamefully tends to the Reproach and Dishonour of our common Christianity; and which should excite in us all, a religious Zeal and sincere Inclination to use our utmost Endeavours to heal our Divisions, and remove the Partition-Wall that separates us, that we may unite in one common Bond of Faith, Love, Charity, and holy Communion.

The chief Objections made by the dissenting Laity against conforming to the Church of *England*, may I think be reduced to these following Particulars. A Set Form of Prayer; or, at least, the Impropriety of the present Liturgy. The Use of God-Fathers and God-mothers. The Sign of the Cross in Baptism, and kneeling at the Sacrament! These are all, or the most material Points that are urged and insisted on, by the dissenting Laity, in Favour of their Separation from us. What concerns ministerial Conformity shall be afterwards briefly considered.

As to Forms of Prayer, I can by no means agree to give that Point up; since their Lawfulness may be proved from Scripture; and for near 600 Years after Christ, we have sufficient Testimony of their being publicly used. Nay *Calvin*, who prayed *extempore* after his Lecture, always used a Form before it. Besides, this Objection lies equally strong against the foreign Reformed Churches, as against ours, who have all of them, even *Geneva* itself, a public Liturgy. And permit me to observe, that Dissenters themselves are as much confined to a Form in their Prayers, as we are, tho' not always to the same; for they must join in the Words of their Minister, which is as much a Form to them, as ours is to us; but with this great Difference, that we may consider our Forms before-hand, acquaint ourselves with their Meaning, and be satisfied in the Lawfulness of every Petition; whereas they must immediately join therein, without any previous Examination. The Propriety of the Matter, and the Decency of the Expression in the Prayers which they join in, are left wholly to the Discretion of the Minister, in the Use of which they must implicitly follow him. And tho' nothing improper should be delivered, yet thro' the quick Succession of one Sentence to another, many Expressions must naturally escape that due

Consideration which is required previous to our joining therein, and saying *Amen*.

But the lawfulness of Forms of Prayer is even admitted by a modern, furious, bigotted Zealot for Nonconformity *, who says, “ The Dissenters recommend Forms of Prayer to all who need them ; and several of their Ministers have published a Variety of Forms of Devotion, for the Benefit of such People ; nay, to shew their Desire of Union, and manifest their Readiness for the Church’s Peace, to conform in every Respect wherein they may without sinning, they consented to use a public Liturgy, if purged from Error, and adapted to the general State of Christians.”

I do admit that the Prayers we join in, is a Subject of the highest Concern and Importance ; that the Matter should not only be lawful, but also decent and proper ; and tho’ it may convincingly be proved that our present Liturgy contains nothing sinful, yet, with the Dissenter, I do really disapprove of some Things, which may be altered for the better, the Particulars whereof shall be mentioned under the next Head. But then to whom should it be referred to settle this ? To consult every single Person who is to join in public Worship, is impracticable ; to adjust a Liturgy to every one’s Fancy, to accommodate it to all the various inconsistent Objections that have been, or may be made to any Part of it, is impossible. The only practicable Expedient is to trust the Composition to some Persons, of whose Wisdom, Piety, and Abilities, we may reasonably presume ; and I hope our present Ecclesiastical Superiors will not be judged an improper Choice. It is not to be imagined, that the Composition which, after the most deliberate Revisals, they might agree on, will be free from all Objections ; that no one will dislike any Part of it, or Fancy could alter it for the better : But I know no Method so proper, by which a public Liturgy can be framed, and received into common and public Service.

As to the Use of Sponsors, the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, and kneeling at the Sacrament, how defensible soever they may be in themselves, as I verily believe they are, yet it is needless, in this Place, to urge any thing in Favour of them, since they are some of those human Institutions, which

* *Vindication of Protestant Dissenters*, pag. 91.

for the sake of Peace, Unity, and Charity, I think may be left indifferent in their Use, for the Reasons hereafter to be assigned. I shall therefore proceed,

Thirdly, to propose such Alterations in Things necessary, as would be for the real Honour and Advantage of the Church of *England* to have altered and amended, even without any Regard to a Comprehension, or Favour to the Dissenters.

And because Authorities have more Weight with some, than Reason and Argument, I shall therefore produce such Authors of our Church, in favour of the Alterations recommended by me, as have been highly esteemed for their Learning, Orthodoxy, and zealous Attachment to the Established Church.

In the first Place, I would beg leave to submit to the serious Consideration of our Governors, both in Church and State, the great Reasonableness, Necessity, or Expediency, of having a new Translation of the Bible, as also of reviewing and correcting the present Liturgy, and Book of Common Prayer, the Thirty-nine Articles and Canons. These are Things which all moderate good Men, who are Lovers of Truth, Peace, and Unity, as well Clergy as Laity, not only amongst the Dissenters, but the Established Church, have greatly wished for, and earnestly desired to have attempted; and which, if accomplished, would add new Lustre, Power, and Honour to our Church, by largely and effectually contributing to the greater Purity of its Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline.

But before I proceed to offer my Reasons for these Alterations and Amendments, which I hope to do, by many solid and convincing Arguments, besides Authorities to be produced, in Confirmation thereof; it may be necessary to obviate and remove one general Objection, that I have often met with, against any Alterations of this Nature; namely, that such an Attempt will tacitly imply, if not directly acknowledge, that we have all this Time been in an Error, and which will give Occasion for some to reflect on the Church of *England*, for her past Conduct. But this is so weak and slender an Objection, against so just, reasonable, and Christian an Undertaking, as not to deserve any other Answer, than only to observe, that this Reason or Argument, if it be one, holds equally strong against the Reformation itself; against rectifying of any Mistakes or Errors,
even

even after the strongest Convictions of Mind ; against the making any new Acts of Parliament, or altering any old ones, that have been found prejudicial or hurtful to the Subject. And for the same Reason, would we be consistent, let us prohibit the Study of Divinity, of Physic, of Arts and Sciences, and restrain all manner of Improvements in the Knowledge of either : Nay, we may at once commit to the Flames, the Works of *Lock*, *Boyle*, *Newton*, and many other eminent Writers, who have refuted ancient Errors, and made very considerable Discoveries, for the Benefit and Utility of Mankind. And if we must resist Information, and act in direct Opposition to our Knowledge, to the Discoveries made by ourselves or other learned Men, and persevere in our mistaken Opinions, *only* because we may be reflected on, for our not being sooner wise, or for a long Continuance in our former Ignorance, how justly may it be said of us, that *Light is come into the World, but we love Darknes rather than Light, because our Deeds are, or have been evil.*

Indeed, the Translators of our Bible, tho' Men of high Stations in the Church, also of great Learning and Abilities, had the same Difficulties and Objections to encounter with in their Time. And as it may conduce to several useful Purposes, for the Reader to be informed of what then happened on the Occasion, I think it very proper and expedient to observe in this Place, some of the Objections then started against a Translation of the Bible, and the Reply made thereto by those great Men the Translators, which may be seen more at large in their Preface to the Folio Edition of the Bible ; whose Reasoning is so cogent and conclusive, as to be, in Fact, a strong and convincing Answer to whatever can hereafter be urged, on that or the like Occasion ; and is equally applicable to a Review and Alteration of the Common Prayer, Articles, and Canons of our Church, in Things necessary, as to a Translation of the Bible. Indeed some Allowance must be made for the Language in those Days, and manner of Expression.

The Translators first Remark is very just ; “ Zeal to promote the common Good, whether it be by devising any thing ourselves, or revising that which hath been laboured by others, deserveth certainly much Respect and Esteem, but yet findeth but cold Entertainment in the World. It is welcomed with Suspensions instead of Love, and with Emulation

lation instead of Thanks. And if there be any Hole left for Cavil to enter, (and Cavil, if it do not find a Hole, will make one) it is sure to be misconstrued, and in Danger to be condemned; this will easily be granted by as many as know Story, or have any Experience; for was there ever any thing projected that favoured any way of newness or renewing, but the same endured many a Storm of Gainsaying or Opposition."

They then proceed to observe, That "many Mouths have been open a good while, with Speeches about the Translation so long in Hand; and ask what may be the Reason, what the Necessity of the Employment? Hath the Church been deceived, say they, all this while? Hath her sweet Bread been mingled with Leaven? her Silver with Dross? her Wine with Water; her Milk with Lime? We hoped that we had been in the right Way, that we had had the Oracles of God delivered unto us, and that tho' all the World had Cause to be offended, and to complain, yet that we had none? Hath the Bread been delivered by the Fathers of the Church, and the same proved to be Stones? What is it to handle the Word of God deceitfully, if this be not? Was their Translation good before, why do they now mend it? If it was not good, why then was it obtruded to the People? To this we answer, in the Words of St. *Jerome*, Do we condemn the antient? in no Case. But after the Endeavours of them that went before us, we take the best Pains we can in the House of God. We are so far from condemning any of their Labours that travelled before us in this Kind, either in this Land, or beyond Sea, either in King *Henry's* Time, or King *Edward's*, or Queen *Elizabeth*, of ever renowned Memory; that we acknowledge them to have been raised up of God, for the building and furnishing of his Church; and that they deserve to be had of us, and of Posterity, in everlasting Remembrance. Therefore blessed be they, and most honoured be their Names, that break the Ice, and give the Onset upon that, which helpeth forwards to the saving of Souls. Now what can be more available thereto, than to deliver God's Book, unto God's People, in a Tongue which they understand? Since of an hidden Treasure, and of a Fountain that is sealed, there is no Profit; and as *nothing is begun and perfected at the same Time*, and the *latter Thoughts* are thought to be
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the *wiser* ; so if we, building upon their Foundation, that went before us, and being holpen by their Labours, do *endeavour to make that better, which they left so good* ; no Man, we are sure, hath Cause to mislike us : they, we persuade ourselves, if they *were alive, would thank us*. How many Books of profane Learning have been gone over again and again, by the same Translators ; by others. Of one and the same Book of *Aristotle's* Ethicks, there are extant not so few as six or seven several Translations. Now if this Cost may be bestowed upon the Gourd, which affordeth us a little Shade, and which to Day flourisheth, but to-morrow is cut down ; what may we bestow, nay, what ought we not to bestow upon the Vine, the Fruit whereof maketh glad the Conscience of Man, and the Stem thereof abideth forever. And this is the Word of God which we translate. Therefore let no Man's Eye be evil, because his Majesty's is good ; neither let any be grieved, that we have a Prince that seeketh the Increase of the Spiritual Wealth of *Israel*, but let us rather bless God from the Ground of our Heart, for working this religious Care in him, to have the Translations of the Bible maturely considered of, and examined : For, by this Means it cometh to pass, that whatsoever is found already, the same will shine as Gold more brightly, being rubbed and polished ; also, if any thing be halting or superfluous, or not *so agreeable to the Original*, the same may be corrected, and the Truth set in Place. And what can the King command to be done, that will bring him more true Honour than this ? And wherein could they that have been set to work, approve their Duty to the King, yea, their Obedience to God, and Love to his Saints, more than by yielding their Service, and all that is within them, for the furnishing of the Work ? ”

But we must answer another Cavil and Objection against us, for altering and amending our Translations so often ; wherein our Adversaries deal hardly and strangely with us. For to whom ever was it imputed for a Fault, by such as were *wise*, to go over that which he had done, and to amend it where he saw Cause ? St. *Austin* was not afraid to exhort St. *Jerome* to a Recantation ; the same St. *Austin* was not ashamed to retract, we might say revoke many Things that had passed him, and doth even glory that he seeth his Infirmities. If we will be Sons of the Truth, we must consider
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what it speaketh, and trample upon our own Credit, yea, and upon other Mens too, if either be any way an Hindrance to it." How strong is the Reasoning of our excellent Translators, and pertinent to the present Occasion!

But these Difficulties and Objections did not hinder or prevent either the Translators, or our then Civil and Ecclesiastical Governors, from the Undertaking; but as soon as the same appeared necessary, neither the Difficulty of the Attempt, the Clamour and Reflection of the Ignorant and Bigotted, nor the artful Devices of the Priests and Jesuits, (whose Interest and Practice always did, and ever will lead them to oppose Reformation, as being what naturally tends to discover and detect their Cheats and Impostures on Mankind) could not intimidate or deter them from enterprizing and accomplishing what they knew would tend to clear up the Truths of Religion, and promote the Propagation of the Reformed. An Example this, worthy the Notice and the Imitation of our most gracious King, his Bishops and Clergy.

And the Judgment and Practice of the Church of *England* in other Instances, is also a sufficient Refutation of this absurd Objection. For as the Bible has had five Translations in the Space of Eighty-two Years, namely, from 1525, in *Henry* the VIIIth's Reign, to 1607, when the last Translation was made in the fifth of King *James* the First; so the Common Prayer has been reviewed and corrected, no less than eight Times in the Compass of one Hundred Fifty-two Years; I mean, from 1536, to the last in 1661 *.

Nay, the Church of *England* herself, in the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer, declares, "That the particular Forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being Things in their own Nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged; it is but reasonable that upon weighty and important Considerations, according to the various Exigencies of Times, and Occasions, and Alterations, such Changes should be made therein, as to those that are in Place of Authority, should from Time to Time seem either necessary or expedient. Accordingly we find, that in the Reigns of several Princes of blessed Memory, since the Reformation, the

* Dr. *Nicholls* on Common-Prayer, Preface and Notes.

Church, upon just and weighty Considerations, hath yielded to make such Alterations, in some Particulars, as in their respective Times were thought convenient."

These Instances are a clear and evident Demonstration, that our Governors, Civil and Ecclesiastical, have frequently judged it lawful and expedient, (and were not ashamed of being thought in the wrong) to make various Translations of the Bible, and Alterations in the Common-Prayer. And if Translations of the Bible have been so often made, because former ones were found defective, can any Person assign a true Reason, why Articles of Faith, which should be deduced from Scripture, and that according to its Meaning in the original Language, may not be altered upon the like weighty and important Considerations; nay, reduced where there are such a Number of them: And is it not equally reasonable that such Changes and Alterations should be *again* made in the Common-Prayer, and Canons of the Church, according to the various Exigencies of Times and Occasions, as to those that are in Authority shall think necessary or expedient? And most certainly, never were there at any former Time more just and weighty Considerations, for the Church to yield to make still farther Alterations than what offer at this present Conjunction. The Reasons for it being many, strong, and powerful.

To prove and evince the Necessity of a new Translation of the Bible, I need only to observe, that the different Interpretations, and various Readings of the Learned, in their Comments and Annotations, in the Sermons printed and preached by Divines of any Eminency, do all conspire to confirm and establish this Truth. A Fact so well known, that it is needless to attempt farther Proof, unless to refer the captious or doubtful to *Pool's* Synopsis, and the Commentaries of *Hammond, Patrick, Kidder, Whitby, Weller, &c.* on the Bible; and in particular to Mr. *Lewis's* complete History of the several Translations, whereby they may soon receive Satisfaction, and be convinced of the Reasonableness and Necessity thereof; and the great Advantages we have over former Times, by a superior Light and Knowledge in the original Languages of the Holy Scriptures, through the Labours of many learned Critics to explain them, is a Consideration of great Weight, to enforce other Arguments in Favour of the Undertaking.

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As to the Expediency of a Review of the Book of Common Prayer, besides the Alteration of Language, there are many Expressions that might be changed for others more clear, pertinent, and no way liable to any Objection. Dr. Nicholls very justly observes, "That it is no Reflection on the Common-Prayer-Book, to say, * there are some Things, which are not so clear, at least, to ordinary Persons; the very Language itself may be very well supposed to be altered somewhat, in an hundred and fifty Years." And gives Instances of several Words that are now used in a different Sense, from what they were in *Edward the Sixth's* Reign. Dr. *Pridenax*, Dean of *Norwich*, expresses himself much in the same manner; says he, "† All Language being in fluxu, should our Liturgy be still continued, without any Change or Alteration, it would at Length be as much in an unknown Language, as now the *Roman Service* is, to the Vulgar of that Communion." And Dr. *Stanhope*, Dean of *Canterbury*, takes Notice, "That the very considerable Changes which have happened to many of our modern Languages, and particularly the great Improvement made in the *English* Tongue, within the last Century, are a mighty Prejudice, even to the most valuable Things before that Time; no Weight of Matter or Beauty of Thought, is sufficient to procure them, that good Acceptance, which they would not fail to find, if dressed in a more modish Garb ‡." The same Reason and Argument, I beg Leave to apply to the Common Prayer, which if new dressed, and modernized, would be more agreeable to all, and used with more devout Affection than now it is.

* Forms of divine Worship, of all Things certainly should be so composed, as to be the least subject to any Scruple, from any Persons whatsoever; being on Purpose composed, for the declaring Mens Unity and Consent in their public Worship ||. † I always did, and always shall heartily wish, and if it were in my Power, I should endeavour (says the good and pious Bishop *Bradford*) that all the Liturgies of the Church, were reduced to as great Simplicity and Plain-

• Dr. *Nicholl's* Preface to his Paraphrase on the Common-Prayer, 8vo Edit.

† Connect. Part I. p. 218

‡ Preface to Translation of *Parson's* Direct.

|| *Stillingfleet*, Iren. p. 122.

ness as might be.* And a former Bishop of *Cork* remarks, "That notwithstanding what I have said, of the Excellency both of the Common Prayers, and of Cathedral Performances; I do conceive, the Alteration of an Expression, or here and there, a whole Prayer or two, by Law, or dispensing with some Ceremonies, will not break the Harmony and Beauty of our Worship, or disturb the Union and Peace of our Church. There are some Collects, I conceive, may be altered for the better."

The learned and celebrated Mr. *Hales*, in his Tract of Schism, observes, * "That were all public Forms of Service so framed, as that they admitted of no particular private Opinions, but contained only such Things in which all Christians do agree, Schisms upon Matters of Opinion would utterly vanish." And, says Bishop *Stillingfleet*, "† were we so happy but to take off Things granted unnecessary by all, and suspected by many, and judged unlawful by some; and to make nothing the Bonds of our Communion, but what *Christ* has done, viz. one Faith, one Baptism, &c. allowing a Liberty for Matters of Indifferency, we might indeed be restored to a true primitive Lustre. God will one Day convince Men, that the Union of the Church lies more in the Unity of Faith and Affection, than in the Uniformity of doubtful Rites and Ceremonies."

"It has never gone well with the Church of *Christ*, (says Bishop *Wake* †) since Men have been so narrow-spirited as to mix the Controversies of Faith with their public Forms of Worship; and having made their Liturgies, instead of being Offices of Devotion to God, become Tests and Censures of the Opinions of their Brethren."

His Lordship, in his Speech on Dr. *Sacheverel's* Trial, speaking in Defence of the Alterations that were attempted to be made in 1689. in the Reign of King *William*, by a Review of our Liturgy, observes, "that it was a Design which would have been for the Interest and Peace of our Church and State, had it been accomplished: It was to improve, and, if possible, to enforce our Discipline, to review and enlarge our Liturgy, by correcting of some Things, by adding of others; by leaving some few Ceremonies, confessed

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* Tracts, p. 182.

† *Irenicum*, p. 120.

‡ Vol. Serm. p. 195.

to be indifferent in their Natures, as indifferent in their Usage, so as not to be necessarily observed by those who make a Scruple of them."--And then he proceeds to observe, in the Words before cited, "If Things alterable be altered upon the Grounds of Prudence and Charity; and Things defective be supplied; and Things abused be restored to their proper Use; and Things of a more ordinary Composition be revised and improved; whilst the Doctrine, Government, and Worship of the Church remain entire, in all the substantial Parts of them; we have all Reason to believe, that this will be so far from injuring the Church, that it will receive a very great Benefit by it."

"Let any impartial Person consider (says his Lordship) what was there in such a Design, that could be justly esteemed prejudicial to the Constitution of our Church. Wherein would our Canons have suffered, if those already made had been more strongly enforced, and some new ones had been added for the Reformation of Manners, for the better punishing of notorious Offenders, and to render our public Discipline more strict and severe? This we have been wishing for ever since the Reformation, what Harm would it have done our Church, had it now been effected? or how would our excellent Liturgy have been the worse, if a few more doubtful Expressions had been changed for plainer and clearer; and a Passage or two which however capable of a just Defence, yet, in many Cases, seem harsh to some, even of our own Communion, had been wholly left at Liberty in such Cases, to be omitted altogether, or been so qualified, as to remove all Exceptions against them in any Case. If such Collects as are not yet adapted to the Festivals or Gospels to which they belong, had been more full and apposite to both; if some of the occasional Offices had been enlarged, and new ones added; if, for Example, there had been a greater Variety of Prayers, Psalms, and Lessons, appointed by Authority, instead of the Compositions of private Persons, now necessarily to be used for the Visitation of the Sick; and new Forms composed for the Use of Prisoners for Debt, or Crimes; for the greater Solemnity of receiving Profelytes into our Church, of reconciling Penitents to it, and of casting notorious Offenders out of it. These were some of the main Things then designed. As to any Favour to the Dissenter, none was intended, but what should

should have been entirely consistent with our own Constitution. And I hope it will not be thought any Crime, for the Bishops and Clergy of our Church, to be willing to enlarge its Communion, by any Methods which may be likely to gain others, and yet not injure our own Establishment."

Archbishop *Tenison*, in his Discourse concerning the Ecclesiastical Commission, in 1689. thus observes; "our Constitution was reviewed in 61, and yet notwithstanding that Review, is capable of another; the Commissioners of that Time did not add the last Hand to that Work, so as to render it incapable ever after of being corrected and improved. Some who have well considered all the Alterations and Additions then made by them (which amount to the Number of six Hundred) are sufficiently convinced, that if they had Reason for those Changes, there is *equal*, if not *greater Reason*, for some farther Improvements. If they had foreseen what is since come to pass, I charitably believe they would not have done all that they did, and just so much, and no more."

"Our Worship (says Bishop *Burnet* *) is the perfectest Composition of Devotion that we find in any Church, ancient and modern; yet the Corrections that were agreed to by a Deputation of Bishops and Divines, in the Year 1689, would make the whole Frame of our Liturgy, still more perfect, as well as more unexceptionable; and will, I hope, at some Time or other, be better entertained than they were then." And even Dr. *Calamy*, speaking of the Commissioners at that Time appointed to review the Liturgy, thus expresses himself. "They drew up sundry Alterations, a Copy of which I have by me. Thus much I shall venture to say, that such Amendments as these were, with such Allowances, in point of Orders, for Ordination by Presbyters, as is made 13 *Eliz.* cap. 12. would, in all Probability, have brought in two Thirds of the Dissenters in England, which being done, and at the same Time a Liberty continued to such as could not be comprehended, would have been greater Service than can well be imagined." I hope, therefore, the Expediency and Necessity of having the Common-Prayer reviewed and corrected, is clearly and fully evinced and demonstrated, both by Reason, Argument, and the best Authorities.

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* *History of his own Times*, Vol. II. p. 634.

As to the Sign of the Cross, kneeling at the Sacrament, the Surplice, and Godfathers and Godmothers, I beg Leave to recommend to Consideration the Sentiments of the celebrated Bishop *Stillington* on the Occasion, and whose Affection and true Zeal for the Church Established was never questioned. In his Preface to the *Unreasonableness of Separation*, after answering several of the Dissenters Objections, he thus writes.---“ But what! is there nothing to be done for dissenting Protestants, who agree with us in all doctrinal Articles of our Church, and only scruple the Use of a few Ceremonies, and some late Impositions, shall these Differences still be continued, when they may be so easily removed? and so many useful Men be encouraged and taken into the Constitution? Do we value a few indifferent Ceremonies, and some doubtful Expressions, beyond the Satisfaction of Mens Consciences, and the Peace and Stability of this Church? Tho’ there is no good Ground for any Scruple of Conscience, as to the Use of the Ceremonies complained of, yet notwithstanding, because the Use of Sacraments in a Christian Church ought to be the most free from all Exceptions, and to be so administer’d, as rather to invite than discourage scrupulous Persons from joining in them; I do think it would be a Part of Christian Wisdom and Condescension in the Governors of our Church, to remove those Bars from a Freedom in joining in full Communion with us, which may be done, either by taking away the Sign of the Cross; or, if that may give Offence to others, by confining the Use of it to the public Administration of Baptism, or by leaving it indifferent, as the Parents desire it. As to kneeling at the Lord’s Supper, since some Posture is necessary, and many devout People scruple any other, and the primitive Church did, in ancient Times, receive it in the Posture of Adoration; there is no Reason to take this away, even in Parochial Churches; provided, that those who scruple kneeling, do receive it with the least Offence to others, and rather standing than sitting, because the former is most agreeable to the Practice of Antiquity, and of our Neighbour Reformed Churches. As to the Surplice in Parochial Churches, it is not of that Consequence as to bear a Dispute one way or other; and as to Cathedral Churches, there is no Necessity of Alteration.”

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“ With respect to the Use of Godfathers and Godmothers, I see no Necessity of adhering so strictly to the Canon herein, but that a little Alteration may prevent these Scruples, either by permitting the Parents to join with the Sponsors, or by the Parents publicly desiring the Sponsors to represent them in offering the Child to Baptism; or which seems most agreeable to Reason, that the Parents offer the Child to Baptism, and then the Sponsors perform the covenanting Part, representing the Child, and the Charge after Baptism be given in common to the Parents and Sponsors.”

“ These Things being allowed, I see no Obstructions remaining, as to a full Union of the Body of such Dissenters with us, in all Acts of Divine Worship and Christian Communion, as do not reject all Communion with us to be unlawful. We do heartily and sincerely desire Union with our Brethren, if it may be had on just and reasonable Terms; and if they can be taken in without Reproach or Dishonour to the Reformation of the Church, I hope no true Son of the Church of *England* will oppose it. And was a Review of the Common-Prayer made by wise and peaceable Men, not given to Wrath and disputing, it might be so far from being a Dishonour to this Church, that it may add to the Glory of it.” And having also advised several Particulars to be altered concerning Ministerial Conformity, he concludes thus; “ these are all the Things which appear to me reasonable to be allowed, in order to an Union, and which I suppose may be granted without Detriment or Dishonour to our Church. There are other Things very desirable towards the Happiness and flourishing of this Church; as the Exercise of Discipline in Parochial Churches in due Subordination to the Bishop; the reforming the Ecclesiastical Court, as to Excommunication, without Prejudice to the excellent Profession of the Civil Law; the retrenching Pluralities, the Strictness and Solemnity of Ordinations, the making a Book of Canons suitable to this Age, for the better regulating the Conversation of the Clergy; such Things as these might facilitate our Union, and make our Church, in spite of all its Enemies, become a Praise in the whole Earth.” How full and pertinent is the good Bishop in favour of a Comprehension and Union among Protestants!

And whenever our Governors shall think proper to undertake a Thing of this Nature, besides the Alterations before-mentioned,

mentioned, I would beg Leave also to recommend some others to their Consideration.

First, That as the Psalms were most of them composed by *David*, and many adapted to his particular Circumstances, some figurative, and others prophetic, and that such are not in the least applicable to our present State and Condition; it is submitted, whether if there was a Collection made from the whole Book of Psalms, of the most plain and devout, and suitable to our Times, for Morning and Evening Service, it would not tend to many good Purposes.

Secondly, To have the Lessons now taken from *Leviticus*, and some other Parts of the Old Testament, exchanged for such as are of more general Use and Instruction. As also new Hymns appointed, in the room of what are now used.

Thirdly, For the Lord's Prayer to be said only once in Morning and Evening Service; to omit, *Let us pray*, before some of the Prayers; and not so often to repeat *Lord have Mercy upon us*. Some Expressions in the Church Catechism, the Absolution of the Sick, and the Burial Office, to be changed for others more pertinent, and less liable to Objection. To reject the *Athanasian* Creed, and to use the Apostles, or *Nicene*, in its Stead. The Rubric for none to communicate, but who have been confirmed, to be left out. The Reasons for such Alterations are so well known, that it is needless to repeat them.

As to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, when it is considered how many of them are not now believed in their primary Sense, even by great Numbers of the Church Established; as those concerning Original Sin, Free-will, Justification by Faith only, Predestination and Election, of *Christ's* Descent into Hell, and some others; it would be an Instance of great Goodness, and Christian Moderation in our Governors, to have them carefully reviewed, and such only retained as are indisputably clear and certain, and perfectly agreeable to Scripture; in regard it is declared by the sixth Article, "that whatsoever cannot be proved thereby, ought not to be required of any Man, to be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation." And intricate Points of a disputable Nature, ought not to be made Articles of Faith.

The happy Advantages to be obtained by a Translation of the Bible, a Review of the Common-Prayer, and Canons,

after the Model recommended by Bishops *Stillington* and *Wake*, are many and weighty. For it will tend to disarm the Papists and Deists of their Arguments taken from the present ill Version of Scripture, some Expressions in the Liturgy and Church Catechism, and the Inconsistency of Clergymens Practices with their Oaths of Canonical Obedience. It will render the Worship and Discipline of our most excellent Church, yet more exact, pure, and perfect; and recommend it to the more general Esteem of all, both at Home and Abroad. It will tend to raise a greater Spirit of Piety and Devotion in the Minds of her Members, as her Liturgy and public Offices will be more correct and clear in Expression, and the Language more pathetic, and better adapted to our present Times; than which nothing seems so effectually to promise a Reformation of Manners in the Lives of all Persons: It will confirm and strengthen the Protestant Interest, and make our Communion less liable to Objection; and those who unhappily dissent from us, will entertain more favourable Sentiments of our Worship and Service; if not so far to join therein, yet their Prejudices being removed, their Love and Charity will gradually encrease towards us.

And if so many of our Bishops thought a Comprehension would not prejudice, but rather tend to the Honour and Advantage of our Church, and the Security of the Protestant Interest; if the Act of Uniformity required an universal Conformity, and enforced it by civil Compulsions and Penalties; if the Design of the many Authors of our Church who wrote the *London Cases*, and of others since, was to convince the mistaken Dissenter by Reason and Argument, in order to their joining with us in the same way of Worship and Church Communion; Can then an Alteration of our Liturgy, in Things necessary and wanting Amendment, agreeable to the Rules of Wisdom, Reason, and Prudence, made by lawful Authority, be of any ill Consequence to our Church, should it effect at last, what by so many different Ways and Methods hath been long attempted without Success, namely, that our Establishment may by such an Alteration be so well approved of by Dissenters, as to have them join in Communion with us.

A Design then so laudable, an Undertaking so extensive, in favour of the *Protestant Religion*, cannot fail of meeting
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with the united Applause and Approbation, the Aid and Assistance of the learned, pious, and judicious Members of the Church of *England*, both Clergy and Laity; and I hope also of the Dissenters. And none but *Papists*, and those who are averse to all Reformation, can oppose what is in itself so just and reasonable, and so well calculated to advance the Truth and Purity of the Christian Religion. And if what is here recommended will tend to the Glory of God, the Propagation of his true Religion, the Honour, Dignity, and Security of the Church Established, as I think has been fully evinced; What Motives or Inducements can be more engaging and prevalent, to have it effected? or what Period of Time more favourable and concurring, for having this pious and long wish'd-for Design accomplished, than what the present affords? and how inexcusable will it be, should we neglect an Opportunity so advantageous, so highly conducing to such great Ends and Purposes?

Let these Considerations awaken in the Minds of all good People, a serious and hearty Inclination towards a farther Reformation. Let every one contribute thereto by their Prayers and good Wishes, where they cannot give any other Assistance. Let Prejudice and Prepossession, the too general Effects of Education and Custom, be prudently abandoned and discarded. For this is not a Concern of a trifling or indifferent Nature; but it is the Cause of Truth, the Cause of Religion, the Cause of *Protestants* of all Denominations, who therefore ought most heartily to engage in and espouse it.

And were these Particulars once altered and amended, and the Clergy then only required to make the following Declaration, instead of subscribing to any Articles, or giving their Assent and Consent to all Things contained in the Book of Common-Prayer, as is now practised; and that the re-ordination of Dissenting Ministers was dispensed with; I can see no just Objections that could then be offered against Ministerial Conformity, or any Injury thereby accruing to the Church of *England*.

“ I *A. B.* do solemnly profess and declare, that I believe
 “ in one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that the
 “ Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testament, are
 “ the Revelation of God's Will to Mankind, and that they
 “ do contain all Things necessary to Salvation; and that no-

“ thing ought to be required to be believed as an Article of
 “ Faith necessary to Salvation, but what can be proved
 “ therefrom. And I do also profess and declare, that I be-
 “ lieve all the Articles of the Creed called the Apostles,
 “ [understanding the Word *Hell*, there to signify the Grave,
 “ or Place of departed Souls;] and that it contains the Sum
 “ and Substance of the Christian Faith, in all Things ne-
 “ cessary to Salvation. And I do farther engage and pro-
 “ mise, that I will use the Form of Prayer as now altered
 “ and established, and in all Things conform myself to the
 “ Rules, Orders, and Directions therein appointed.”

Or least this should not be so much approved of as the
 following Form of Subscription; to be used either alone, or
 added to the above, which, on account of the great Power,
 Influence and Abilities of its Author, cannot but meet with
 a favourable Reception from both the Clergy and Laity of
 the Church of *England*, as I doubt not but it will from the
 Dissenters, I mean that of the present learned and judicious
 Dr. *Gibson*, Bishop of *London*, viz.

“ I *A. B.* do solemnly profess and declare, that I believe
 “ that the World, and all Things in it, were created by
 “ God, and are under the Direction and Government of
 “ his all-powerful Hand: That there is an essential Diffe-
 “ rence between Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice: That
 “ there will be a State of future Rewards and Punishments,
 “ according to our Behaviour in this Life: That *Christ* was
 “ a Teacher sent from God, and that his Apostles were di-
 “ vinely inspired: That all Christians are bound to declare
 “ and profess themselves to be his Disciples: That not only
 “ the Exercise of the several Virtues, but also a Belief in
 “ *Christ*, is necessary in order to our obtaining the Pardon
 “ of Sin, the Favour of God, and Eternal Life: That the
 “ Worship of God is to be performed chiefly by the Heart,
 “ in Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgivings; And as to all
 “ other Points, That *Christians* are bound to live by the
 “ Rules which *Christ* and his Apostles have left them in the
 “ holy Scriptures. *.”

‘ Here (says his Lordship) is a fixed, certain, uniform
 Rule of Faith and Practice, containing all the most neces-
 sary Points of Religion, established by a divine Sanction,

* *Bishop of London's Second Pastoral Letter*, p. 24, 25. 1730.

embraced

embraced as such by all Denominations of Christians, and in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve the Knowledge and Practice of Religion in the World. As to Points of greater Intricacy, and which require uncommon Degrees of Penetration and Knowledge; such indeed have been Subjects of Dispute among Persons of Study and Learning, in the several Ages of the Christian Church; but the People are not obliged to enter into them, so long as they do not touch the Foundations of Christianity, nor have an Influence upon Practice.'

And here it cannot be amiss to observe the Remarks of Mr. Ghandler, a Dissenting Minister, on this Paragraph of his Lordship's, in a Letter from him to my Lord *, in the Year 1734. 'Happy for your Lordship, happy for all the Dissenters from the Establishment, that your Lordship professes yourself an Advocate for all Denominations of Christians, and have the Courage to declare in the Face of the World, that they all embrace that fixed, certain, and uniform Rule of Faith, which is in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve the Knowledge and Practice of Religion in the World; notwithstanding their different Degrees of Understanding, and every one's Partiality to his own Conceptions. I have, my Lord, publicly declared, that if an Establishment was made upon your Lordship's Foundation, upon such a fixed, certain, uniform Rule of Faith and Practice, as could be embraced by all Denominations of Christians; I did not know a single Dissenter in England, that would be against it. If you, my Lord, had been of the narrow Principles of some of the ancient, or more modern Bishops, and accounted every Variation from the public Faith to be damnable Heresy, your Lordship must have been for the Exclusion of all such Denominations of Christians out of the Establishment, as you believed to be infected with such heretical Pravity. But your Lordship's Charity is more extensive; and I am sure your Lordship must believe in your Heart, what you have declared with your Pen, that all Denominations of Christians agree in the Substance of Religion, and in all the most necessary, the great essential fundamental Articles of it.' By Con-

* A Vindication of a Passage in the Bishop of London's Second Pastoral Letter, p. 7. 37, 38, &c.

' sequence,

' sequence; my Lord, none of the several Denominations of
 ' Christians can be Heretics, in your Lordship's Judgment,
 ' unless your Lordship will admit this evident Contradiction,
 ' that a Person may be an Heretic, who holds the Substance,
 ' and all the most necessary Points of Christianity. By fur-
 ' ther Consequence, my Lord, your Lordship cannot be for
 ' rejecting any of the Denominations of Christians out of the
 ' Church of *Christ*, because your Lordship hath declared them
 ' Members of the Church of *Christ*, by declaring, that they
 ' all agree in the Substance, and most necessary Articles of the
 ' Christian Faith. By farther Consequence, my Lord, your
 ' Lordship cannot be for excluding them the Church of *Eng-*
 ' *land*; because should your Lordship be for receiving them
 ' into the Church of *Christ*, and for excluding them out of
 ' the Church of *England*, it would be putting such a Diffe-
 ' rence between the Church of *Christ*, and the Church of
 ' *England*, as would not be for your Lordship's Honour, or
 ' the Credit of the Church of *England*; and by one farther
 ' Consequence, my Lord, your Lordship must, in Principle
 ' and Conscience, be for receiving all Denominations of Chri-
 ' stians into the Church of *England*; that is, for such an Esta-
 ' blishment as will comprehend all the several Denominations
 ' of Christians; except your Lordship will maintain this far-
 ' ther evident Contradiction, that *they* may be *excluded* from
 ' your Church, who ought, as Christians, to be received in-
 ' to the Church of *Christ*. But your Lordship, as a good
 ' Father, extends your Love to *Christians of all Denominati-*
 ' *ons*; and have, as it were, *ex Cathedra*, pronounced them
 ' all united in the Substance of Christianity, as embracing one
 ' certain, divinely established Rule, that contains all the most
 ' necessary Points of Religion. If these are natural Infe-
 ' rences from your Lordship's Principles, your Lordship is too
 ' great a Lover of Truth, to be displeased with me for setting
 ' them in a clear Light. I doubt not but your Lordship will
 ' steadily pursue these Principles in Practice, and chearfully
 ' lend your Assistance to pull down that Wall of Separation,
 ' which, since its first Erection, hath so unhappily divided
 ' this Part of the Church of *Christ*. I am sure, as to my-
 ' self, that as I reverence the Episcopal Character, as an Of-
 ' fice of great Antiquity and Dignity; so there is nothing I
 ' more sincerely wish, than that as your Lordship hath openly
 ' espoused the Principles of Liberty, to vindicate Christianity
 ' against

' against the Objections of its professed Adversaries; so your
 ' Lordship may, in an honourable Consistence with yourself,
 ' employ all your Influence to promote so good a Cause, and
 ' to restore all Denominations of Christians to their just Li-
 ' berties, as they have the Honour to agree with your Lord-
 ' ship in that fixed, certain, uniform Rule of Faith and
 ' Practice, which contains all the most necessary Points of
 ' Religion, and is in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve
 ' the Knowledge and Practice of Christianity in the World.
 ' The impartial Part of Mankind will expect this from your
 ' Lordship. The Dissenters, my Lord, depend on you to be
 ' so far in their Interest, as to assist them in their humble Ap-
 ' plication to the Legislature for their Restoration to their
 ' Rights of Subjects; and will never believe, 'till after the
 ' fullest Conviction, which they think impossible, that your
 ' Lordship will ever act in so manifest a Contradiction to your
 ' own Principles, as to be any longer for excluding them ei-
 ' ther the Church of *England*, or the common Privileges of
 ' Subjects, whom you publicly acknowledge to be genuine
 ' Christians. Your Lordship hath done them the Justice to
 ' own, that they agree to your Lordship's own Rule.'

It must be confessed, that this easy and plain Passage of
 the Bishop of *London's*, has been the Occasion of much
 Controversy between Dr. *Berryman* and Mr. *Johnson*, on
 the one Side, and Mr. *Chandler* on the other. The two
 former thinking, that to fix upon his Lordship as his Sentim-
 ent or Opinion, "that the several Denominations of
 Christians agree in the Substance, that is, all the necessary
 Articles of Christianity, was very injurious to him, and
 which could not, with any Shew of Probability, or even
 with tolerable Decency, be imputed to a Person of his Lord-
 ship's Station and Character, and in whose Writings there
 is not the least Hint or Footstep of any such Notion, but
 the direct contrary; and whose Sentiments were by no
 means favourable to a *Plan for the Union of all Christians* *;"
 which was the Interpretation Mr. *Chandler* had given of
 those Words. Now without disputing whether his Lord-
 ship intended the above Paragraph to be a Model or Plan
 for a Subscription, yet, with Submission, I think, there
 must be great Force used, and the Words strangely wrested

* *Johnson's Letter to Mr. Chandler*, p. 3, 4, 5.

contrary to their true and natural Meaning, and very injurious to his Lordship, if when his Lordship says, " that it will appear, that the *several* Denominations of Christians agree both in the Substance of Religion, and in the necessary Inforcements of it * ; and that *all* the Denominations of Christians did embrace that certain and uniform Rule of Faith and Practice (which his Lordship had described as above-mentioned) containing all the most necessary Points of Religion, established by a divine Sanction, and in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve the Knowledge and Practice of Religion in the World ; " that yet, at the same Time, his Lordship had no such real Meaning with respect to Dissenters, when applied in their Favour, for that then those Words were of no Force or Efficacy, they being only intended by his Lordship to be made use of as an Argument against Infidels." And yet this is the Substance of Mr. *Johnson's* Sophistry, or what he calls " rescuing his Lordship's Sentiments from Mr. *Chandler's* injurious Representation of them." But, was this *Equivocation* really Fact, what must Deists and Infidels think both of his Lordship and his Advocates? For all Trifling and Insincerity in Religious Matters, cannot but give the Enemies of our Religion, I mean Papists, Deists, and Infidels, great Advantage over us.

But as these were, no doubt, his Lordship's *real* Sentiments in the Year 1730, (and I have not heard that my Lord has ever publicly disowned them, tho' his Lordship has, since his Second Pastoral Letter, obliged the World with three very useful Tracts † ;) so, if compared with his Lordship's Sentiments beforementioned, Page 7 and 8, in 1719, which perhaps Mr. *Johnson* never saw, it will evidently appear, that " it has always been an avowed Maxim with his Lordship, that nothing can preserve our Succession in the *Protestant* Line, but Unanimity among those who have ever appeared its fast Friends ; and that the endeavouring to cultivate a good Understanding among *Protestants at Home and Abroad*, was the only Means, under God, to support the Church of England, and the whole *Protestant Interest*, against the Designs and Attempts of *Popery*." This is what his Lordship seems " to take all Opportunities to de-

* *Second Pastoral Letter*, p. 24, 25.

† *Third Pastoral Letter*, 1735. *Charge to his Clergy*, 1731. *Pastoral Letter*, 1745.

clare and enforce, in the most open and public Manner. And to say, that a Design, in itself so pious and Christian, was not to be attempted without undermining and endangering the Church of England, is a Reproach our Church has not deserved." You will remember, that this Design was "to gain Protestant Dissenters to a full Compliance with our Church, and to obtain an universal blessed Union of all Reformed Churches, both at Home and Abroad; that all who confess the holy Name of our dear Lord, and do agree in the Truth of his holy Word, may also meet in one holy Communion, and live in perfect Unity and godly Peace," and which was also recommended by Archbishop Sancroft, as "the surest Foundation of Safety to the State, and as the best Means of enlarging and strengthening the Church *." I need only to add, that if his Lordship still continues in the same Principles, as there is no room to question, and would heartily espouse and engage in a Translation of the Bible, and an Alteration and Correction of our Liturgy, Articles, and Canons, which will naturally promote that pious and Christian Design of uniting Protestants, which his Lordship has so often declared and enforced in so open and public a Manner, and endeavour to have it accomplished, tho' under much greater Limitations and Restrictions, with respect to Subscriptions, than what is expressed in the above Paragraph; how would his Lordship be applauded, honoured, and esteemed by all Denominations of good Christians; and his Name be perpetuated with the utmost Veneration to the latest Posterity. And such an Example would, besides, have great Weight to influence all Orders and Degrees of Men among us, cordially to approve of, and join in so pious and Christian an Undertaking.

As to the Validity of Presbyterian Ordination, I shall here only observe, that were we to deny it, we must, at the same Time, render invalid the Ordination of all the Reformed Churches abroad, as well as the Church of Scotland. There is, I remember, a remarkable Instance in favour of this Sentiment, to be met with in Archbishop Spotswood's History of that Church, on Occasion of a Motion made for re-ordaining of some who had before been ordained by the Presbytery of Scotland, in the Reign of James I. when

the learned Bishop *Andrews*, and four other Bishops then present, confessed and acknowledged the Validity of their Ordination, and would not re-ordain them, because, as they then declared, the Ordination of the Reformed Churches abroad, would thereby be called in Question.

Thus have I finished what was at first proposed ; and besides what has been urged to those of our Communion, to prevail on them to entertain Thoughts of Love and Unity towards their Brethren, who unhappily differ from them, and to promote and assist in a Comprehension, so far as lies in their Power ; I would now more immediately apply myself to the Dissenting Laity, and in the Spirit of Meekness, exhort them also to conquer their Prejudices, to abate of their Asperity, and to join in whatever may contribute to unite us in one holy Communion ; that so our Divisions may no longer scandalize our Profession, and afford *Papists* and *Infidels* an Argument and Objection against our Religion.

But it may be proper, in the first Place, to observe, that the Reasoning and Arguments I have made use of, to persuade the Dissenting Laity to an Union with us, and a Compliance with the Terms of our Communion, are intended by me, as much to convince them of the Duty and Necessity of their conforming now to our present Establishment, as at any future Time, in Case our Liturgy should be reviewed, and such other Alterations made in our Offices of public Worship, as to our Government might be thought convenient ; and this in order to avoid Schism and Dissention, and to preserve that Union and Christian Fellowship among us, which is so earnestly pressed and recommended to their serious Consideration, and, as I think, by many cogent, conclusive, and powerful Arguments. Because Union and Christian Communion at all Times become a Duty, where it can reasonably be obtained, as well as the dangerous Consequence of Schism and Dissention, is always to be dreaded and avoided, as far as is possible ; nor is this View of mine any way inconsistent with my wishing for, desiring, and recommending to our Governors the several Alterations and Amendments before specified, which also appear to me to be highly necessary and expedient ; for the many Reasons that have been urged, was there not a Dissenter in *England*. And were our Liturgy, Articles, and Canons, to be at this
Time

Time carefully and judiciously reviewed, altered, and corrected, where needful, and the Bible newly translated; and this undertaken by learned, discreet, pious, and peaceable Men, to be lawfully authorized for that Purpose, it would, no doubt, remove many Objections now made by Dissenters, and perhaps the same would not again become necessary, so long as the World itself shall endure; in regard we can never expect to attain a more exact Knowledge in the Original Languages, or for the *English* Tongue to arrive at greater Perfection, than what the present Age affords. And this being once effected, it may be the means of extinguishing for ever all Sects among *Protestants*, but that of the *Quakers*.

As to the Dissenting Laity, to whom I now chiefly address myself, let me entreat them to consider, "that there is manifestly between us a Breach of that Communion of Saints, that Union and Spiritual Society, which the Gospel requires among *Christians*. You most certainly separate from, and hold not Communion with us. In the Language of the primitive Church, there is Altar set up against Altar, Worship against Worship, Pastor against Pastor. If there ever was a Schism in any Age or Part of the *Christian* Church, I apprehend, here is one between us; and it nearly concerns us to examine who is in Fault.

That this Separation has been made by your Departure from the Church of *England*, and not we from you, is a Fact none can deny. For tho' there are some, who were never Members of our Church, being brought up from their Childhood in a dissenting Way, yet if their Predecessors departed from us, and they continue the Separation in the same Manner, and that such Separation was at first sinful, then, by a Parity of Reason, those who continue in and adhere to the present Separation, must also, in some Degree, partake of their Sin; and nothing can excuse such from the Guilt of Schism, unless they can assign sufficient Reasons to justify it. Indeed, if our Church requires any thing unlawful, as a Condition of Communion, and you cannot join in our Worship and Offices, without doing something forbidden by *Christ*, then are we the Schismatics, and not you. But if, on the contrary, you can join in our Worship and Offices, without breaking the Laws of *Christ*, then are we guiltless, and the Sin of this Separation, let the Na-

ture of it be what it will, must lie on you. This is the proper Rule to govern ourselves by. When God and Man command different Things, there is no Question but *God is to be obeyed rather than Man*, Acts iv. 19. But when our lawful Superiors enjoin nothing forbidden by God's Law, then surely we may obey Man, without offending God; since God has commanded us, *to obey and submit ourselves to those who rule over us, and watch for our Souls*, Heb. xiii. 17. and I apprehend, whoever pays this Submission to them, within the proper Limits of their Authority, performs a Christian Duty, and obeys God, by obeying them. I have before admitted, that if any Person is persuaded in his own Mind, that our Terms of Communion are sinful, that he cannot, in such Case, innocently conform; but then it concerns all such, carefully to examine the Grounds of this Persuasion, and to make use of all Means of Instruction, to be rightly informed of the Points in Dispute; and, on this Enquiry, to divest themselves of all Passion and Prejudice, and to regard with equal Attention what is said on both Sides. I must also observe, that such Enquiry should be confined to the Lawfulness, or Unlawfulness of the Thing scrupled; for in this only is *Conscience* concerned. If the Things which offend are confessed to be in their own Nature indifferent, that is, neither commanded nor forbidden by God, then such Things, when commanded, can be no just Reason, in *Conscience*, for any one to separate from us. For what do such mean, when they say, they can't in *Conscience* join with us? Is it not, that they should thereby offend God? Nothing can be a Rule of *Conscience*, but some Law of God; and if it be acknowledged, that the Things you are required to comply with, be not forbidden by God, then certainly you cannot offend God by complying with them; for *where there is no Law, there is no Transgression*; and consequently, there is no Room to plead *Conscience* in the Case. If it should be said, you do not condemn our Worship, or the Ceremonies prescribed in it, as unlawful, but that you like another way of Worship better; you think our Ceremonies improper, inexpedient, &c. which are sufficient Reasons for departing from us.

To this I answer, that these are, at most, but Considerations of *Prudence*, perhaps only of *Humour*, but certainly not of *Conscience*. For let it be considered, that all Union

of Men in public Worship is impossible, unless Things of mere prudential Consideration are submitted to some public Determination.

The Nature of the Thing, and also the Apostle's Precept requires, that *Decency and Order*, 1 Cor. xiv. 40. should be preserved in public Worship; but without observing some Rules, these Ends cannot be obtained; and since there are not, and perhaps could not be prescribed any special Rules in Scripture for these Things in all Ages, it must remain a Matter of Prudence and Discretion; and in such Points, Men always have, and ever will differ in Opinion; and there is no Way possible for a Society of Men to be united in Sentiment, with respect to such Particulars, than by the Submission of the minor Part to the Judgment of the major; or, which is the same, to refer the Determination to some common Authority? And this, I conceive, is agreeable to your own Practice, in many Instances. For is it not left to each of your Ministers, to determine in these Things for himself and you, to observe what Order he pleases in Prayer, Instruction, &c. and to use what Gestures he thinks fit in his several Administrations? Do not you acquiesce in his Choice for himself and you, and submit your own Behaviour to his Advice or Direction? And what more is required of you by the Church from which you separate, but only to submit your own Behaviour to the Direction of your Pastors *?

“ No Doubt you would be glad, that such Way of Worship, and such a Scheme of Church Fellowship, as you most approve, should be generally received and established. This, (whatever it may be now) was the profest Desire of all Persons of any Character, amongst your Ministers, from the Beginning of the Separation; and the unhappy Covenant, which your Predecessors entered into, in it's first Article, declares this, to be it's Intention.——
To bring the Churches of God, in the three Kingdoms, to the nearest Conjunction, and Uniformity in Religion, Confession of Faith, Form of Church Government, and Directory for Worship and catechising; that they, and their Posterity after them, might as Brethren live in Faith and Love.——In which Profession it was then very truly supposed, (and there

* Dr. Roger's Address.

seems

seems to be the same Reason for it now) that it is the Duty of all Christians, to live together as Brethren in Faith and Love; and that the most effectual means to this End, is *some Sort of an Establishment*; or a Conjunction and Uniformity in Religion, Confession of Faith, &c. But this is impossible, without a Submission of some, to the Judgment of others.

In all Cases of this Nature, the Bounds of private Consideration, must be the Lawfulness, or Unlawfulness, of what is established: But in Questions of Expediency, it is our bounden Duty, and what the Nature of all Society requires, that we should submit our several private Judgments, to the Judgment of public Authority; not only in civil Concerns, but also as to the Externals of Religion; and that no Uniformity of Men or Churches, in Confession of Faith, Form of Government or Worship, can be established; and, consequently, no Brotherly Union in Faith and Love be preserved, upon any Scheme, imaginable, without admitting these Principles."

If our modern Dissenters should happen to differ, in Sentiment and Practice, from their Predecessors, with Respect to some Sort of an Establishment, or Uniformity in divine Worship, and therein dissent from them, as they do from us, I think the more is the Pity; and which evidently demonstrates, that when once an unreasonable Spirit of Dissention prevails, Christian Liberty, so valuable in itself, may insensibly degenerate into Licentiousness; unless carefully watched, and kept within due Bounds.

"Indeed where the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of an Action is in Question, the Law of God, in the Books of Holy Scripture, is doubtless the Rule and Measure of every Christian Duty, so far as the Direction of that Law reaches; and tho' in enquiring into the Sense of that Law, we are bound to use all proper Methods of Information, and among those, as one of the most necessary, to consult and advise with Persons, of whose superior Knowledge, we may reasonably presume to confide in, and especially those, who *are over us in the Lord*, and to pay as much Deference to their Authority, as it is fit and reasonable for us to do, in an Enquiry into the meaning of any other ancient Book; yet, if in the Result of such Application, we cannot be satisfied, but that the Action required from us, is, or seems

seems to be, forbidden by God's Law, we must not then, in Compliance with any Authority, perform it. If we thus *please Men*, we cannot also be the *Servants of Christ*, Gal. i. 10. But where the Question is only concerning Expediency and Inexpediency, &c. there the Command of the Apostle should take Place,—that *we speak the same Things, be of one Accord, and join together in the same Mind, &c.* But how must this be effected? By all exactly concurring, in one and the same Judgment? No, surely; this is not to be expected. But this is his Direction,—*to lay aside all Strife, and Vain-Glory, in Lowliness of Mind, each esteeming others better than themselves*; and as he elsewhere requires, *submitting one to another*. When we have tried and considered all Schemes of being united, as the Apostle commands, this only will be found practicable in Society; that in all Questions of Expediency, as before observed, the one Part must submit to the Judgment of the other; the lesser to the greater, or which will be the same thing in Result, the whole submit to the Judgment of public Authority; and, consequently, this the Apostle must be understood to command; for if Submission be, in the Nature of the Thing necessary to such Union, as he enjoins; when he enjoins the Union, he must enjoin the Submission: And if the one be a Duty the other must be so too *."

And for Exhortation to so good and Christian a Work, as that of a happy Union among Protestants, let me accost you in the Words of Archbishop Wake: "Remember how earnestly our blessed Saviour prayed to his Father, *that all who should believe on him, might be one*; and that he has made it the Badge of our Discipleship: *By this shall all Men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another*. How passionately did St. Paul exhort the Disciples of the Gospel, *by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they all speak the same Things; that there be no Divisions among them; that they be perfectly joined together in the same Mind, and the same Judgment*, 1 Cor. i. 10. With what an affectionate Earnestness does he beseech them to Love and Unity: *If there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies, fulfil ye my Joy, be ye like minded, having the same Love, being of one Accord, and one Mind*. Phil. ii. 23.

* Dr. Rogers's Address.

" And

“ And may I not beg leave, tho’ not with the Authority, yet with the Charity of St. *Paul*, to apply all this to those unhappy Divisions, that at this Time rend in Pieces the Church of Christ among us ; and beseech you, by all those endearing Considerations, to pursue those Things which may make for our Peace ; and for the closing of those Breaches, which the Malice of our Enemies, too successfully begun, and our own Weakness, has too fatally kept up among us. Never certainly was there a Time, since the Name of Separation was heard of among us, in which we had greater Reason to consider of such an Union ; or, I hope, a fairer Opportunity, to promise ourselves an Accomplishment of it ; only let us on all Hands be as careful to improve it, as I am perswaded we have all of us, not only seemed to desire, but have indeed earnestly longed for it. Let us then unite in the strictest League of Friendship with one another.

This will indeed render both ourselves and our Religion glorious to the World ; and may be a happy Augury, that the blessed Time, so long wrapped up in sacred Prophecy, is indeed now ready to be revealed ; when the Church of Christ, being purged from those Corruptions that have so long defaced it’s Beauty, shall again appear in it’s Primitive Purity : When all Heresy and Schism being every where abolished, and the Mystery of Iniquity laid fully open, and the Man of Sin destroyed ; true Religion, and sincere Piety shall again reign throughout the World. O blessed State of the Church-Militant here on Earth ! The glorious Ante-Past of that Peace and Piety, which God has prepared for his Church triumphant in Heaven ! Who would not wish to see those Days, when a general Reformation, and a true Zeal, and a perfect Charity passing thro’ the World, we should all be united in the *same Faith*, the *same Worship*, the *same Communion* and Fellowship one with another ; when the Holy Scriptures shall again triumph over the vain Traditions of Men ; and Religion no longer take it’s Denomination from little Sects and Factions, but we shall be content with the same common primitive Names of Christians and Brethren ; and live together as becomes our Character, in Brotherly Love, and Christian Charity, with one another.”

To conclude : The Zeal I have for the true Protestant Religion, for the Honour of our Church, and for a firm Union

Union among Brethren, was the great Motive to this Undertaking. I have studiously avoided all Expressions tending to Strife and Animosity, or whatever might seem to widen our Differences; and my hearty Prayers are, "that he who is the God of Peace, and Fountain of Wisdom, would so direct the Counsels of those in Authority, and incline the Hearts of the People, that we may not be driven into the Abyss of Popery, but that true Religion being preserved among us, we may with one Heart and one Mind, serve the only true God, thro' his only Son Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, and our alone Mediator and Advocate." *Amen.*

February 2, 1747-8.

ERRATA.

Page 1. Line 16. after, says he, read *I presume I may*; l. 20. read, *and so does the Author.* Page 15. Line 14. read, after weat, *Bread.*

FINIS.



Union among the people of the world is the only way to peace and happiness. It is the only way to the betterment of the human race. It is the only way to the establishment of a just and equitable world. It is the only way to the realization of the dreams of the people of all nations. It is the only way to the achievement of the goals of the human spirit. It is the only way to the attainment of the heights of human civilization. It is the only way to the fulfillment of the destiny of the human race. It is the only way to the creation of a new and better world. It is the only way to the establishment of a just and equitable world. It is the only way to the realization of the dreams of the people of all nations. It is the only way to the achievement of the goals of the human spirit. It is the only way to the attainment of the heights of human civilization. It is the only way to the fulfillment of the destiny of the human race. It is the only way to the creation of a new and better world.



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